

**Remarks/Arguments**

Claims 1-8 been canceled and new Claim 9 added which delineates certain patentably distinct features.

Particularly, Claim 9 requires a club including a golf ball contacting portion which includes a plurality of slots having a substantially identical width and a length which varies (e.g., lengthens) as the distance of a slot to the heel of the golf ball contacting portion increases. Further, a slot is formed by two parallel and opposed flat walls which extend in the direction of a user of the club and are parallel to the longitudinal axis of the slot.

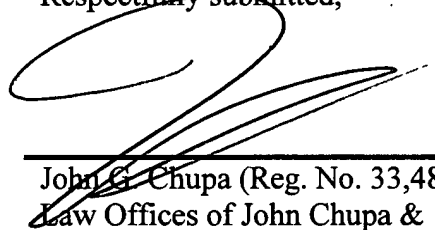
In this manner, the club may be easily moved through sand or another medium. Particularly, since most of the force is applied from the handle to the heel, Applicant has discovered that the length of the slots needs to increase as their position is removed from the heel in order to ensure that the energy is uniformly transferred to all slots, thereby reducing the drag and allowing the ball contacting portion to be uniformly (i.e., a non-twisting manner) moved through a medium. That is, a twisting or torque force will tend to be produced if portions of the golf ball contacting portion do not uniformly move through the medium. Further, the slots must be of a uniform cross-sectional area in order to reduce drag. The parallel flat sidewalls also reduce drag, allow uniform movement force to be applied to all portions of the golf ball contacting portion, and allow the club to be efficiently and uniformly moved through sand or another medium. Applicant has further found it to be highly desirable to separate said handle from the slots by a portion of the golf ball contacting portion (see Figures 1 and 2) in order to allow some of the

applied force to be absorbed before being transferred to the slots, thereby allowing for better control.

In contradistinction to the claimed requirements, the Evans reference (see Figure 2, for example) does not have uniform slots (e.g., the distance from the heel to 34 is different than the distance between 34 and the next surface). Additionally, the Evans reference does not include two parallel and opposed flat walls but instead has surfaces which are pointed (see Fig. 2, 36), and this undesirable feature cooperates with the non-uniform slots to cause torque or rotation. The remaining Figures of the Evans reference do not have slots which increase in length from the heel to end, and none of the Evans references separate the handle from the slots. The remaining references all show slots within (not extending through) a golf ball contacting portion which increases force non-uniformity.

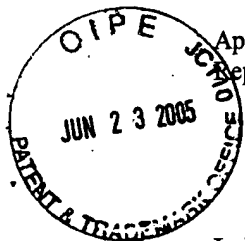
For all of the foregoing reasons, the new Claim 9 is allowable over the art of record and such allowance is respectfully requested. If there are any further questions regarding this matter, please call the Applicant's undersigned Attorney at (248)-324-7787.

Respectfully submitted,



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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I, Meredith Valant, do hereby certify that the foregoing Response to Office Action is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, to the Box Response with Fee, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2005.

  
Meredith Valant